66TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Addressing Adolescent Literacy

Pam Leitzell &
Elizabeth Gibbs

SELF-ASSESSMENT: A Journey of Change

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction

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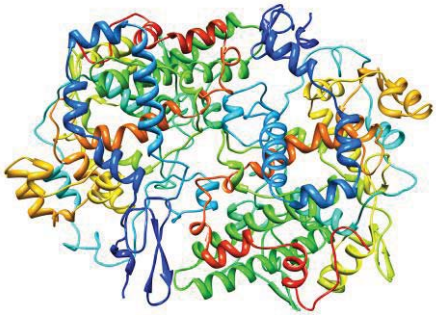
Adolescent Literacy

How do we shift from …

Learning to Read

Reading to Learn

It's complex!



The Reality:

Between 1973 and 2015, the share of jobs in the U.S. requiring a postsecondary education increased from 28% to 61%.

The Crisis:

According to the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) - also known as the nation's report card – the performance of our seventeen-year-olds in reading achievement remains **flat**.

The majority of students could not score in the proficient range.

Let's ....Kahoot!

To see what we know about the state of Adolescent Literacy.

- You will need a smart phone/device.
- Go to kahoot.it
- Enter the game code shown on the screen.
- Press enter.
- Choose a nickname.
- Press OK.
- Let's Play!

Adolescent Literacy Fact Sheet

How do we address the problem?

A School-Wide Focus on Literacy

AdLit.org
www.adlit.org/webcasts/makingroom/

Resources for parents and educators

- AdLit.org is a national multimedia project offering information and resources to the parents and educators of struggling adolescent readers and writers. AdLit.org is an educational initiative of WETA, the flagship public television and radio station in the nation's capital, and is funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York and by the Ann B. and Thomas L. Friedman Family Foundation.

Six Key Elements of a Secondary Adolescent Literacy Program

- Diagnose students' needs.
- Create a common vision to meet the needs of ALL kids. Literacy becomes the center of school improvement.
- Form a Literacy Leadership Team.
- Provide multiple levels or tiers of supports and interventions. The Content Literacy Continuum™ (CLC) has 5 levels.
- Conduct annual reviews to see if you are doing what you said you would do.
- Engage kids – get them motivated.

#1 – Diagnose students' needs; build a literacy profile of your school.

What assessments are currently in place? Start there.

Then think about ways to screen for word analysis, fluency and comprehension.

Then ask some critical questions

Secondary Literacy Profile

Results on the State Assessment:
List percentage of students performing at each level.

ELA Assessment	% Students in Level 1	% Students in Level 2	% Students in Level 3	% Students in Level 4	% Students in Level 5
Grade 6					
Grade 7					
Grade 8					
Grade 9					
Grade 10					
Grade 11					
Grade 12					

Math Assessment	% Students in Level 1	% Students in Level 2	% Students in Level 3	% Students in Level 4	% Students in Level 5
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Indicate all sources of assessment information you receive or have access to on the skills of your students in the following areas (state, district or school assessments, etc)

A. Decoding proficiency ___yes ___no Source: _____
B. Reading fluency ___yes ___no Source: _____
C. Reading vocabulary ___yes ___no Source: _____
D. Reading comprehension ___yes ___no Source: _____
E. Motivation/attitudes ___yes ___no Source: _____
F. Oral language proficiency ___yes ___no Source: _____
G. Oral vocabulary ___yes ___no Source: _____

University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning

Instructional Challenges and Practices:

Identify the following items that would support the literacy levels of your students with a plus (+). Identify those that hinder the literacy levels of your students with a minus (-). Place your answers to the right of your choices.

Student mobility		Teacher expectations	
Student motivation		English Proficiency	
Instructional programs		Family Literacy Practices	
Previous instruction		Parental Support	
Student ability		**Communication among** teachers regarding student performance	

What are the greatest reading-related challenges facing your students? Rank the areas of greatest concern (1) to areas of least concern (8). Place your ratings to the right of each choice.

Reading Fluency		Reading Comprehension		Vocabulary		Self-monitoring	
Motivation		Decoding		Stamina		Background Knowledge	

University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning

Then Ask Some Critical Questions.

Key Questions Regarding Literacy Supports

#1 What happens for those students who are reading below the 4th grade level?

#2 What is in place across a school staff to ensure that students will get the "critical" content in spite of their literacy skills?

#3 What happens for students who know how to decode but can't comprehend well?

#4 What steps have been taken to ensure that powerful learning strategies are embedded across the curriculum?

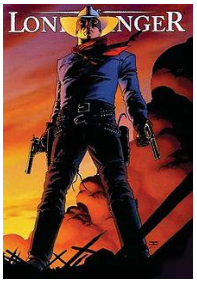
#5 What happens for students who have language problems?

#2 – Create a common vision.

- Begin by discussing the literacy profile of your building.
- Then Ask …. "What do we want our profile to look like in 5 years?"

#3 – Form a literacy leadership team.

This isn't a job for the



It shouldn't be assigned to:

- The English Department
- The Special Education Department
- The Reading Specialists
- The Literacy Coach

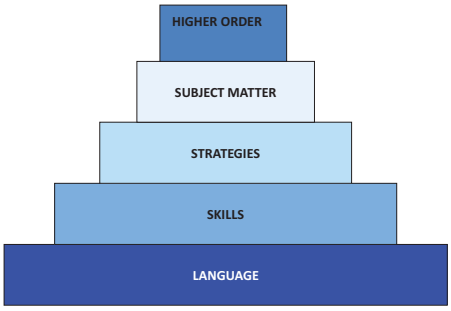
It should be assigned to EVERYONE!

Everyone owns the problem … but different parts of it.

#4 – Provide multiple levels of support.

- Why do we need multiple levels?
- Why won't one intervention solve the problem?

Building Blocks for Content Literacy



A Continu Instruction

um -- CLC)

Level 1: **Enhance content instruction** (mastery of critical content for *all* regardless of literacy levels)

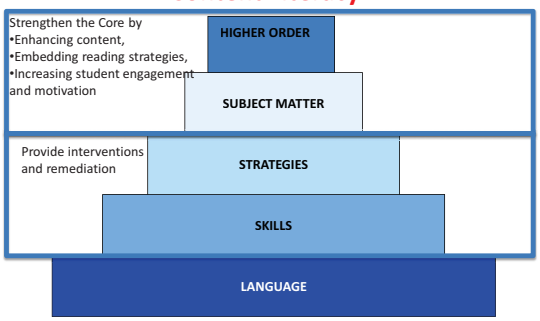
Level 2: **Embedded strategy instruction** (routinely weave strategies within *and* across classes using large group instructional methods)

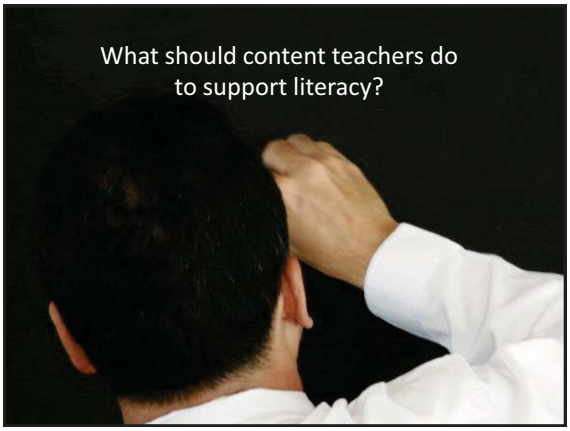
Level 3: **Intensive strategy instruction** (mastery of specific strategies using intensive-explicit instructional sequences)

Level 4: **Intensive basic skill instruction** (mastery of entry level literacy skills at the 4th grade level)

Level 5: **Therapeutic intervention** (mastery of language underpinnings of curriculum content and learning strategies)

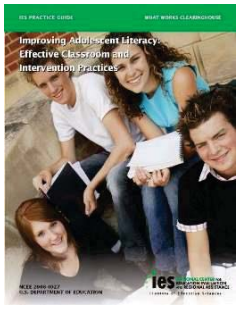
Building Blocks for Content Literacy





Institute of Education Sciences (IES)

Developed practical recommendations for secondary teachers regarding ways to help students learn and understand content



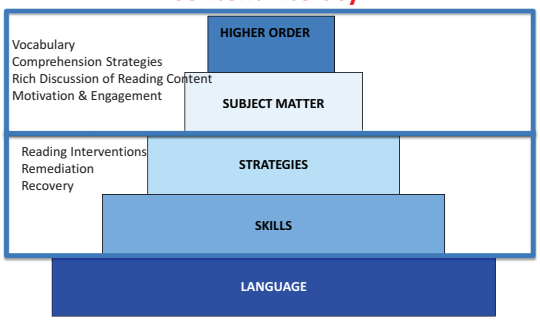
Can you guess the top 5 recommendations?

And the answer is …

Schools should provide the following:

- Explicit **vocabulary** instruction.
- Direct and explicit **comprehension strategy** instruction.
- Opportunities for **extended discussion** of text meaning and interpretation.
- Supports for student **motivation and engagement** in literacy learning.
- Intensive and individualized **interventions** for struggling readers

Building Blocks for Content Literacy



SIM
Strategic Instruction Model®

University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning

www.kucrl.org

#5 – Conduct annual reviews.

- Set Targets.

- Review your progress.
  Did you do what you said you were going to do?

#6 – Engage kids!

Some things to keep in mind:

- Student trust in teachers is important – letting students fall behind sabotages trust.
- Track student progress carefully and give students help right away when they need it.
- We need a variety of valid and rigorous instructional approaches.
- We need to remember that in order to change student behavior, we must start by changing ours.

Addressing **Adolescent Literacy**
Is COMPLEX!

A Team Approach Will Provide Results!

TIME FOR

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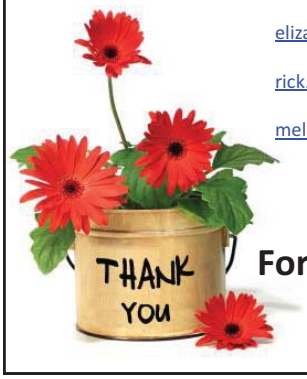
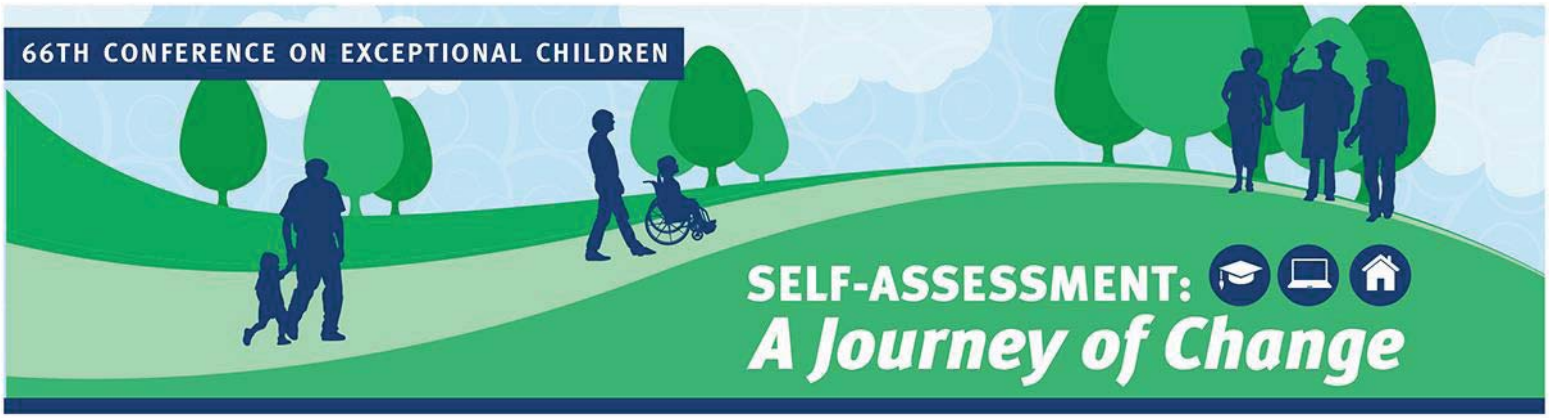


For Coming



Addressing Adolescent Literacy

Handouts

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Adolescent Literacy:

Bridging the College- and Career-Readiness Gap

ALLIANCE FOR EXCELLENT EDUCATION

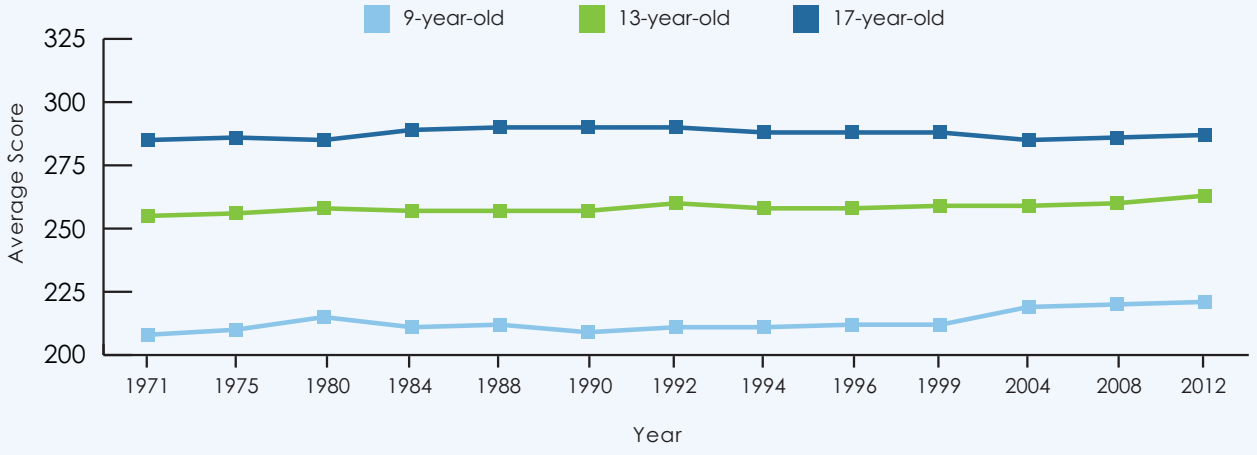
May 2016

Many of the more than 700,000 students who leave U.S. high schools each year without a diploma have low literacy skills.[1]

More than 60 percent of eighth graders and 60 percent of twelfth graders scored below the "proficient" level in reading achievement according to the most recent administrations of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), known as the Nation's Report Card.[2] Even more disturbing, NAEP results reveal that almost half of students of color and students from low-income families enter fifth grade with skills below the basic level on NAEP.[3] These outcomes mean that millions of young people lack the rudimentary reading skills to locate relevant information or make simple inferences. Without essential literacy skills, students are more likely to be retained in school, drop out of high school, become teen parents, or enter the juvenile justice system.[4] The consequences for the individuals and the costs to the nation are staggering in terms of the billions of dollars in wages and earnings lost over a lifetime.[5]

Moreover, between 1973 and 2015, the share of jobs in the U.S. economy requiring postsecondary education increased from 28 percent to 61 percent.[6] Without advanced literacy skills, young Americans are at risk for being locked out of the middle class and working in predominantly low-wage jobs. Unfortunately, over the past four decades, the literacy performance of seventeen-year-olds on NAEP has remained flat as figure 1 shows.[7]

FIGURE 1: Trend in NAEP Reading Average Scores for 9-, 13-, and 17-Year-Olds



Source: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, *The Nation's Report Card: Trends in Academic Progress 2012* (NCES 2013–456) (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2013).

There is good news in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, known as the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA). Under the new law, states now can receive federal support for comprehensive literacy programs from early education through grade twelve for students most in need.[8] ESSA incorporates language from the Literacy Education for All, Results for the Nation (LEARN) Act, creating a discretionary grant program designed to connect policy and practice more directly and powerfully by investing in the knowledge and skills of educators. "[E]nough is already known about adolescent literacy—both the nature of the problems of struggling readers and the types of interventions and approaches to address these needs—in order to act immediately on a broad scale," write Gina Biancarosa, assistant professor of educational methodology, policy, and leadership at the University of Oregon, and Catherine Snow, the Henry Lee Shattuck Professor of Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.[9]

States and districts must confront the enormity of the college- and career-readiness gap by improving literacy education for all students. The facts below make the case for aggressive action to improve the reading and writing skills of adolescent learners across the nation.

- On the 2015 NAEP reading assessment, the most recent for twelfth graders, only 27 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native students, 24 percent of Latino students, and 16 percent of African American students scored at or above proficient, compared to 44 percent of white students and 48 percent of Asian students.[10]

- Meanwhile, 29 percent of twelfth-grade students scored below the basic level in reading, which means that they do not have even partial mastery of the appropriate grade-level knowledge and skills.[11]

- Among twelfth-grade students of color, 38 percent of Latino students and 49 percent of African American students scored below the basic level, compared to 22 percent of white students and 20 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander students.[12]

- Similarly, among eighth-grade students, only 15 percent of African Americans, 20 percent of Latinos, and 22 percent of American Indian and Alaska Natives scored at or above the proficient level on the 2015 NAEP reading assessment, the most recent for this grade.[13] Meanwhile, 22 percent of eighth-grade students scored below the basic level.[14]

- Only 20 percent of eighth-grade students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch reached the proficient level in reading, compared with 47 percent of their more affluent peers.[15]

- Only 3 percent of eighth-grade English language learners scored at or above proficient on the NAEP reading assessment; 72 percent scored below basic.[16]

- Underdeveloped literacy skills are a key reason why many students fail to graduate from high school. Only 76 percent of Latino students, 72 percent of African American students, and 70 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native students graduated from high school in 2014, compared to 87 percent of white students and 89 percent of Asian students.[17]

- Furthermore, states vary widely in how well they address students' language and literacy needs. For example, in 2014, just 18 percent of English language learners graduated on time in Arizona, compared with 84 percent of English language learners in Arkansas.[18]

- Only 46 percent of high school graduates tested on the 2015 ACT met the reading-readiness benchmark, which represents the knowledge and skills a student needs to succeed in credit-bearing, first-year college courses.[19]

- High school students' ability to read complex texts is strongly predictive of their performance in college math and science courses. In 2015, just 28 percent of ACT-tested high school graduates met or exceeded the college-readiness benchmarks in all four academic areas—English, reading, mathematics, and science.[20]

- Only about 27 percent of middle school and high school students met the standards of writing proficiency defined for their grade on the most recent NAEP writing assessment.[21] In addition, roughly one-third of high school graduates are not ready to succeed in an introductory-level college writing course.[22] Remedial education at the postsecondary level costs the nation an estimated $3.6 billion annually.[23]

- About 61 percent of employers request or require high school graduates to get additional education or training to make up for gaps in their ability to read and write.[24] Private industry spends an estimated $3.1 billion annually to bolster the literacy skills of entry-level workers.[25]

Endnotes

[1] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), *Common Core of Data*, Table 1: Public High School 4-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR), by Race/Ethnicity and Selected Demographics for the United States, the 50 States, and the District of Columbia: School Year 2013–14, http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/ACGR_RE_and_characteristics_2013-14.asp (accessed December 21, 2015).

[2] U.S. Department of Education, NCES, NAEP, 2015 Reading Assessment; http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2015/#?grade=8 (accessed December 21, 2015); U.S. Department of Education, NCES, NAEP, 2015 Mathematics and Reading: Grade 12 Assessments; http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_g12_2015/#reading (accessed May 11, 2016).

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[5] Alliance for Excellent Education, America's Promise Alliance, Civic Enterprises, and the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University, *Progress Is No Accident: Why ESEA Can't Backtrack on High School Graduation Rates* (Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education, November 2015) http://all4ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/NoAccident.pdf (accessed January 5, 2016).

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[8] Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Public Law 114-95, 114 Congress, 1st sess., https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/1177 (accessed December 23, 2015).

[9] G. Biancarosa and C. Snow, *Reading Next—A Vision for Action and Research and High School Literacy*, a report to Carnegie Corporation of New York (Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004, second edition 2006), http://all4ed.org/reports-factsheets/reading-next-a-vision-for-action-and-research-in-middle-and-high-school-literacy/ (accessed December 22, 2015).

[10] U.S. Department of Education, NCES, NAEP, 2015 Mathematics and Reading: Grade 12 Assessments.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

[13] U.S. Department of Education, NCES, NAEP, 2015 Reading Assessment.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] U.S. Department of Education, NCES, *Common Core of Data*, Table 1: Public High School 4-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR).

[18] Ibid.

[19] ACT, *The Condition of College and Career Readiness* (Iowa City, IA: Author, 2015), https://www.act.org/research/policymakers/cccr15/pdf/CCCR15-NationalReadinessRpt.pdf (accessed December 21, 2015).

[20] Ibid.; ACT, *Reading Between the Lines: What the ACT Reveals About College Readiness in Reading* (Iowa City, IA: Author, 2006).

[21] U.S. Department of Education, NCES, *The Nation's Report Card: Writing 2011* (NCES 2012–470) (Washington, DC: Author, 2012), http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/main2011/2012470.pdf (accessed January 5, 2016).

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[23] Alliance for Excellent Education, "Saving Now and Saving Later: How High School Reform Can Reduce the Nation's Wasted Remediation Dollars" (Washington, DC: Author, 2011).

[24] Achieve, Inc., *Rising to the Challenge: Views on High School Graduates' Preparedness for College and Careers, Part Two: Employers and College Faculty* (Washington, DC: Achieve, April 2015), http://www.achieve.org/files/AchieveSurveyIIPowerPoint.pdf (accessed January 5, 2016).

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ALLIANCE FOR EXCELLENT EDUCATION

Secondary Literacy Profile

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D. Reading comprehension _____yes _____no Source: _____
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What are the greatest reading-related challenges facing your students? Rank the areas of greatest concern (1) to areas of least concern (8). Place your ratings to the right of each choice.

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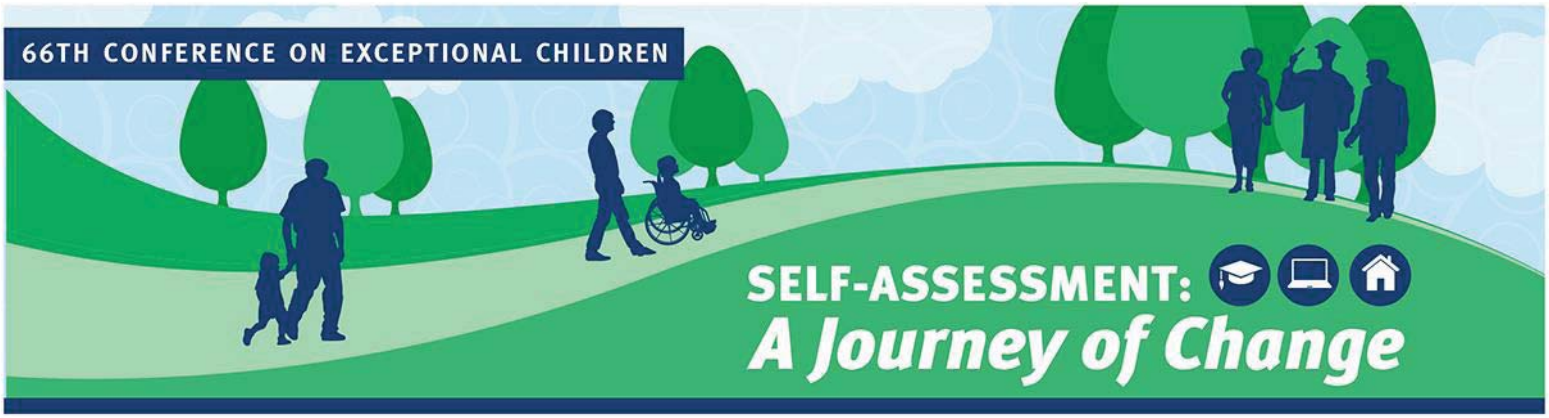
Motivation		Decoding		Stamina		Background Knowledge	



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Resources

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http://sim.kucrl.org
www.ncsip.org
AdLit.org

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What Content-Area Teachers Should Know About Adolescent Literacy. To download this document, visit www.nifl.gov. or https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/adolescent_literacy07.pdf